

W5YI

National Volunteer Examiner Coordinator

REPORT

Up to the minute news from the world of amateur radio, personal computing and emerging electronics. While no guarantee is made, information is from sources we believe to be reliable. May be reproduced providing credit is given to The W5YI Report.

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COMMENTS ON NTIA SPECTRUM INQUIRY

We were disappointed to find that no individual amateurs or ham clubs -- other than ARRL -- responded to the Spectrum *Notice of Inquiry* (NOI) of the *National Telecommunications and Information Administration*. The NTIA is the White House's advisor on telecommunications matters. We presented the main points of the NOI in the Dec. 15, 1989 *W5YI Report*. NTIA administrator Janice Obuchowski said that another opportunity to comment on these matters may not come for another 20 years.

NTIA asked the public to respond to radical proposals for change in radio spectrum management. These include granting spectrum property rights, revision of the concept of "radio services" ...and encouraging or requiring users to convert to new technologies. NTIA received 84 comments.

"Bold" thinking

NTIA's concept of market-based spectrum management -- including auctions, leases or "user fees" -- drew the most comment. Such financial approaches should be of concern to most amateurs, as hams could be required to bid for spectrum even though license fees were defeated in recent federal legislation.

The concept of "money for megahertz" may sound strange, but legislators are now studying it as they search for new sources of revenue without the dreaded tax increases. Rep. Jim Cooper (D-TN) recently stated, "It's the existing franchisees who

are most afraid of a spectrum auction. The users of the future would have less fear of it. Let's be bold in our thinking and assume that all spectrum could be up for sale, including that used by existing license holders. That might persuade some existing licensees that they don't need quite as much spectrum as they've been given by the government for lo these many years. That might do more to free up, faster, a lot of spectrum in unexpected places than any of the wisest bureaucrats could ever hope to do. That's the power of a spectrum auction idea."

One commenter, economist Steven Cord of the Indiana University of Pennsylvania, urged the NTIA to lease the radio spectrum and to update the lease values every three years. The annual values would be set by a government-appointed *Board of Spectrum Value Assessors*.

"The airwaves are the property now of the people of the U.S., more specifically their government, and should not be given away or sold at a one-time auction to private parties," Cord said. Although the amount of money that spectrum leases would raise is unknown, he said it would be significant, given that the average radio or TV station sale is \$4.3 million. Some stations fetch much more, he pointed out -- such as a Los Angeles TV station which sold for more than \$500 million.

The Dept. of Justice believes that spectrum should be auctioned, and that non-profit uses of spectrum

could still be accommodated: "What these criticisms of auctions seem really to come down to is a fear that an auction will prevent socially desirable but uneconomical uses such as public safety services and remote sensing of weather being offered. It is an accepted principle of welfare economics that the government should subsidize those goods and services where the social benefit is greater than the private benefit. These are important concerns, but it appears possible that they could be accommodated under an auction system. For example, a certain portion of the spectrum could be allocated to such uses while the rest is auctioned off, or such users could be given a dollar-value advantage in an auction."

The Dept. of the Interior believes that government and non-profit users should not have to pay for spectrum usage: "This should also extend to entities who, by virtue of their willingness to support the public good through *pro bono* [donated] contribution of time and personal resources, require use of the radio spectrum," the agency said. "A partial list would include amateur radio operators, personal radio service operators, members of MARS, and participants in the Civil Air Patrol and Coast Guard auxiliary. Payment of fees into accounts or trust funds intended to promote or enhance continuance of such voluntary activities is unlikely to result in any tangible benefit, such as additional spectrum, to support their laudable undertakings. Finally, it greatly misreads the intent of volunteerism and the desire of literally hundreds of thousands of individuals to assist society and government in time of need."

ARRL dissatisfied with government actions

The ARRL observed that the FCC's ability to provide "expert leadership" and rational allocation procedures has declined. It pointed to the reallocation of 220-222 MHz: "There is ample evidence in the record to document that the Commission based its proposal on an incomplete and inaccurate picture of present and future amateur occupancy of the 220-225 MHz band; yet, no amount of evidence supplied by the League and by thousands of individual radio amateurs swayed the Commission in the slightest from this predetermined viewpoint..."

"While the public may petition the FCC, file comments and reply comments, request reconsideration, and even appeal certain actions in federal court, the public has, apparently, no entitlement to

the same information as the Commission. This can result in the suppression of information that does not support the Commission's predetermined views. For example, in the course of the Docket 87-14 proceeding, the League attempted to obtain a copy of a Commission memorandum which reportedly questioned the projected demand for land mobile services; our request was denied."

ARRL cited two more examples of questionable decisionmaking. They concerned the 1979 World Administrative Radio Conference (WARC), in which the ARRL participated in advising the Commission on the U.S. position: "On its own last-minute motion, and contrary to the advice of its *Advisory Committee for Amateur Radio* and the comments filed in the NOI proceeding, the FCC proposed that the U.S. proposals include amendment of the Amateur Service rules to make a knowledge of international Morse code optional at the discretion of the administration for operation on any frequency."

"At the time, the international Radio Regulations required a knowledge of Morse code for operation below 144 MHz (now 30 MHz), a requirement that was strongly supported by the amateur community and was not opposed by any significant body of opinion. No satisfactory explanation of this FCC action was ever forthcoming," the ARRL said.

The other example happened when U.S. government broadcasters (Voice of America, Radio Free Europe, etc.) held out for more HF spectrum than could be agreed to by any other HF users inside or outside of government. The issue eventually was decided by the National Security Council. "The manner in which the issue was handled by the Carter administration was most disappointing to the League as well as to many other participants... U.S. participation in future conferences will be more effective if no repetition of this scenario is permitted."

Receiver standards needed

The *National Public Radio* network criticized the FCC's reluctance to establish minimum RFI/TVI standards for radio and TV sets. NPR pointed out that the Communications Act gives the FCC authority to set such standards: "This provision was added in 1982 in an effort to encourage the Commission to adopt standards for television sets and home audio systems renders them unduly susceptible to receiving 'interference' from amateur

"I am a currently licensed Extra Class amateur radio operator and wish to be a volunteer examiner. I have never had my station or operator license revoked or suspended. I do not own a significant

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under "The W5YI Report" Program? If so, please send a copy of
your Extra Class license, the following signed statement, and a

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transmissions that meet all technical standards. The Commission, to date, has not acted on this authority.

"Remedying this fundamental flaw in spectrum management by designating basic receiver standards would be of tremendous benefit to all users of electromagnetic services, particularly consumers, who are typically at a loss to identify the cause of such 'interference'", NPR said. We thought it was interesting that NPR was the only commenter that addressed the receiver standards issue in detail.

Reply comments are due by March 30, to the Office of Policy Analysis & Development, NTIA, U.S. Dept. of Commerce, Washington DC 20230.

BEACON BANDS MOVED

On March 7 the FCC issued its *Report and Order* in PR Docket 89-65, changing the frequency segments that can be used by automatically-controlled beacon stations operating in the 2m and 70cm band. The decision was based on ARRL petition RM-6512.

"Because it continuously transmits a one-way signal, this [automatic] type of beacon is limited to low power and to narrow segments of certain amateur service bands so that there will be minimal disruption from and to other types of amateur station operations," the FCC said. "For example, reception of a beacon station in the currently authorized segments can be disrupted by high power transmissions from amateur stations engaging in moonbounce and other experimental communications. For this reason, the *Notice* proposed to change the segment where beacons can operate in the 2m band from 144.05-144.06 MHz to 144.275-144.300 MHz, and in the 70cm band from 432.07-432.08 MHz to 432.300-432.400 MHz."

The FCC received four comments to its *NPRM*, generally supportive of the proposed action. Although there was some divergence among the commenters as to exactly which subbands should be chosen, the Commission decided to adopt the changes as originally proposed.

The ARRL twice requested that a 1.25m beacon segment be moved from 220.05-220.06 to 220.275-220.300 MHz. The FCC replied that "such relocation would serve no useful purpose in light of the

fact that all types of amateur station transmissions in the 220-222 MHz segment will be deleted when the land mobile service implementation is completed." The Commission said that another beacon segment at 222.05-222.06 MHz will remain as is.

The new rule 97.203 becomes effective May 18, 1990. It now reads:

(d) A beacon may be automatically controlled while it is transmitting on the 28.20-28.30 MHz, 50.06-50.08 MHz, 144.275-144.300 MHz, 220.05-220.06 MHz, 222.05-222.06 MHz or 432.300-432.400 MHz segments, or on the 33 cm and shorter wavelength bands.

NOVICE/TECH 80 METER CHANGE

Based on petition RM-6594 by Bradley Wells/KR7L, the FCC has proposed to move the 80 meter Novice and Technician CW segment from 3700-3750 to 3675-3725 kHz.

Although Novices and Techs may only transmit CW in 3700-3750, Canadian stations use that subband for voice. Wells argued that this results in considerable QRM between U.S. and Canadian stations and that the interference inhibits Novices and Techs in their efforts to improve telegraphy skills.

He asked that the subband be moved to 3675-3725, which he says is lightly occupied and not subject to voice operation in Canada. The Commission invites comments on the proposal, especially with regard to the level of interference experienced in the current segment, and whether relocation would result in any interference to other amateur operations.

Comments on *PR Docket 90-100* are due June 15, 1990 and replies are due July 13, 1990. An original and four copies are required for formal comments; an original and one copy are required for informal comments.

FCC: PIRATES TO PAY MORE

The FCC is increasing the amount of the fine for unauthorized operation of a radio station. The usual amount for a first violation will jump from \$750 to \$1,000.

The routine amount for a first violation of unauthorized operation in the Aviation, Marine, Public

Safety and Special Emergency Radio Services is increasing from \$1,000 to \$1,250. Prices may be going up, but the FCC reminds you that traditional measures including license revocation/suspension, criminal penalties and seizure of equipment will still be available for those who abuse the spectrum.

"The increases were prompted by numerous complaints of interference resulting from 'piracy' of the airwaves," the FCC said in a March 5 news release.

The latest pirate to receive an FCC QSL is Mr. Eloy Escagedo of Miami. He was fined \$1,000 for transmitting commentary and music on 7350 kHz. Escagedo was previously shut down in 1982 for unlicensed operation.

LOW-EARTH ORBIT NETWORK PROPOSED

As anticipated in our May 15, 1989 issue, Orbital Sciences Corp. (OSC) of Fairfax, Virginia has petitioned the FCC to create a new communications service based on 20 small satellites. Called *ORBCOMM*, the service would use 2 W portables and 5 W mobile units to communicate 1,200 and 4,800 bps personal, business and emergency messages and position fixes. The satellites would orbit at 600 miles altitude and would be launched not by conventional rockets, but by air-launched missiles shot into space from under the wing of aircraft at 43,000 feet.

OSC believes that ORBCOMM will provide low-cost service in such applications as mobile data, environmental monitoring and tracking of stolen goods and vehicles. A standard time-signal service would be available to all users at no charge. The company believes that its system will improve upon or be superior to the Personal Emergency Locator Transmitter Service (PELTS) recently proposed by the FCC for the 220-222 MHz band.

No voice would be used, although future developments in voice packetization might eventually permit digital voice transmission through the satellites. OSC requested reallocation of spectrum in portions of the 137, 148 and 400 MHz bands which are currently available mostly to government users.

The company is quick to warn the FCC that if the agency delays, or allows others to delay the launch of ORBCOMM by stretching out the reallocation process with legal maneuvers, then "the United States will lose its pioneering role and accompanying economic and trade benefits in bringing this

new service to the rest of the world." The company is concerned that foreign governments and companies will try to copy its idea. In fact, OSC asked that the FCC grant permission to launch ORBCOMM anyway even while the Commission decides whether to allocate frequencies to the service.

The FCC has given no indication yet of how it will treat the ORBCOMM petition. It is expected that strong objections will come from existing providers of mobile satellite communications services -- whose systems are based on geosynchronous orbit, not low-earth orbit. Government agencies that now use the spectrum may also object; however, they might be willing to acquiesce if they are given special access to the satellites.

OSC has hired a top legal gun to represent them: Albert Halprin, who is former chief of the FCC's Common Carrier Bureau, which regulates satellites. (Mrs. Halprin is Janice Obuchowski, administrator of the National Telecommunications and Information Administration which manages government spectrum use.)

We have previously reported that OSC was sued by another satellite firm, Interferometrics, over the alleged conspiracy of OSC to take technology developed by the *Radio Amateur Satellite Corp.* (AMSAT), which is licensed to Interferometrics. Interferometrics has a business arrangement with AMSAT that allows it to market AMSAT-developed PACSAT technology for low-earth orbit satellites. We don't yet know how, if at all, the lawsuit may affect the OSC's ORBCOMM plan.

● **More HF Woodpeckers Coming!** The March 1990 edition of *Sea Power* reports that production has begun on three **relocatable over-the-horizon radar (ROTHR)** systems that, when deployed in late 1992, will provide battle group commanders with wide-area space to surface surveillance of air and sea traffic from sites in Virginia and on Guam. The site of the third ROTHR site was not disclosed. Over-the-horizon radar sweeps the HF spectrum between 5-28 MHz detecting both airborne and surface targets by back-scatter; return signals reflected back to the ionosphere and then to the receiving antenna. A dual band transmitter is used at frequencies between 5 and 12 MHz and 10.5 to 28 MHz. The system covers the ionosphere down to the sea surface in sectors of ocean between 500 and 1600 miles within a 45 degree arc.

AMATEUR RADIO CALL SIGNS

...issued as of the first of March 1990:

Radio District	Gp. "A" Extra	Gp. "B" Advan.	Gp. "C" Tech/Gen	Gp. "D" Novice
0	WZ0Y	KF0IM	N0LPK	KB0GAM
1	WD1N	KC1TX	N1HJS	KA1VFZ
2	WW2Q	KE2SE	N2KJU	KB2JOW
3	NY3R	KD3RF	N3HWQ	KA3VWM
4 (*)	AB4TW	KN4EZ	N4YHA	KC4OVY
5 (*)	AA5QS	KI5DF	N5QBM	KB5LUZ
6 (*)	AA6UH	KK6HJ	N6YBR	KC6JCV
7 (*)	AA7DO	KG7AX	N7OIZ	KB7JVU
8	WZ8W	KF8ES	N8LXN	KB8JFB
9	WO9Z	KE9VF	N9JIN	KB9EDT
N. Mariana Is.	AH0H	AH0AF	KH0AM	WH0AAL
Guam	KH2M	AH2CF	KH2EI	WH2AMK
Johnston Is.	AH3C	AH3AD	KH3AB	WH3AAD
Midway Island		AH4AA	KH4AD	WH4AAH
Hawaii	(**)	AH6KH	NH6WB	WH6CGU
Kure Island			KH7AA	
Amer. Samoa	AH8D	AH8AD	KH8AI	WH8AAZ
Wake Wilkes Peale	AH9A	AH9AD	KH9AE	WH9AAH
Alaska	(**)	AL7LX	NL7TN	WL7BXE
Virgin Islands	NP2F	KP2BT	NP2DP	WP2AHA
Puerto Rico	(**)	KP4QN	WP4XK	WP4IUH

CALL SIGN WATCH: * = All 2-by-1 format call signs have been assigned in the 4th, 5th, 6th and 7th radio districts. 2-by-2 format call signs from the AA-AK prefix block now being assigned to Extra Class amateurs.

** = All Group "A" (2-by-1) format call signs have been assigned in Hawaii, Alaska and Puerto Rico. Group "B" (2-by-2) format call signs are assigned to Extra Class amateurs when Group "A" are depleted.

Group "C" call signs will first run out in the 4th and 6th call districts where there are only 1,170 and 1,318 1X3 calls left - about enough for six months! [Approximately 200 "N" call signs are issued a month.] The Technician/General class will then be issued Group "D" (2X3 format) call signs.

[Source: FCC, Gettysburg, Pennsylvania]

● **American Telezone**, a Houston, Texas, start-up firm plans to offer unlicensed one-way cordless phone service under §Part 15 Rules. Robert Gray, the company's founder is also the owner of First Cellular Corp, a cellular phone agent/dealer. Gray feels it could take years for CT2 (*Cordless Telephone, 2nd Generation*) to obtain spectrum.

CT2 users simply use their pocket radio telephones to tie into commercially available public telepoints scattered around high traffic areas. Gray wouldn't reveal the spectrum his service would operate on, but the Feb. 26th issue of *RCR* (*Radio Communications Report*) said Gray "...would not

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JANUARY VE PROGRAM STATISTICS

January No. VEC's	1988 *18	1989 *18	1990 *18
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Testing Sessions 253 354 462

VEC	1988	1989	1990
W5YI	44.7%	36.7%	49.6%
ARRL	32.4	37.9	27.9
CAVEC	1.6	5.7	7.1
DeVry	6.3	5.1	5.0
Others	15.0	14.6	10.4

Year-to-Date Sess: 253 354 462

Elements Administ. 4409 5362 7329

VEC	1988	1989	1990
W5YI	31.7%	34.0%	44.3%
ARRL	49.7	44.3	33.6
CAVEC	0.5	6.3	6.9
DeVry	3.9	2.2	4.0
Others	14.2	13.2	11.2

Year-to-Date Elem. 4409 5362 7329

Applicants Tested 2599 3313 4367

VEC	1988	1989	1990
W5YI	32.8%	35.1%	44.4%
ARRL	42.3	42.9	33.4
CAVEC	5.5	4.3	6.5
DeVry	3.1	5.0	4.0
Others	14.2	16.9	11.7

Year-to-Date Tested 2599 3313 4367

January	1988	1989	1990
Pass Rate - All	63.3%	60.1%	60.8%
Pass Rate - W5YI	56.9%	55.5%	52.9%
Applicants/Session	10.3	9.4	9.5
Appl./Session W5YI	9.2	8.9	8.4
Elements/Applicant	1.7	1.7	1.7
Sessions Per VEC	14.1*	19.7*	25.7*

Administrative Errors by VE's/VEC's

January	1988	1989	1990
Defect. Applications	0.73%	0.54%	0.66%
Late Filed Sessions	13.44%	1.41%	1.08%
Defective Reports	1.58%	1.41%	0.43%

***Note:** The FCC previously considered ARRL, W5YI and DeVry to be 13 VEC's each since VEC's initially were appointed on a regional basis. Since any VEC may now coordinate examinations in any region, the FCC reduced the number of VEC Regions (62) to VEC Organizations (18). We have adjusted 1988 and 1989 figures to reflect this change.

[Source: Pers.Rad.Branch/FCC; Washington, D.C.]

A DECADE OF AMATEUR RADIO GROWTH AMATEUR CENSUS FIGURES: 1980 - 1990

For your information, here is the calendar year ending ham operator census for the last ten years. These figures show that while the ham ranks grew at 1.45% over the last ten years, amateur growth has now virtually stopped. Note that the *Novice Enhancement* proceeding increased the Technician level by 25,000, but had virtually no effect on the number of Novices. It is clear that newcomers prefer the Technician to the Novice class. [We show two figures for year ending 1989 - the last is adjusted for the impact of the ten year term operator license.] It is also interesting to note there are less combined General/Advanced amateurs now than a decade ago. All growth in the Amateur Service over the past decade is at the Extra and Technician class level.

Year	Extra	Advan.	General	Tech.	Novice	TOTAL:
1980	26613	88715	123904	70061	72588	381881
1981	29768	94428	125747	76976	80162	407081
1982	31530	94588	119684	75703	88799	410304
1983	34511	95771	118223	77298	85823	411626
1984	36149	97765	116963	80680	80599	412156
1985	38495	97959	117107	83679	78616	415856
1986	41082	97771	115715	85312	79882	419762
1987	43902	98610	114398	93466	83013	433389
1988	46885	98681	113082	101495	80168	440311
1989	50324	102141	117153	115427	85747	470792

Adjusted for difference caused by ten year term license.

1989	47156	95711	109778	108160	80350	441155
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Ten Year Increase/Amateur Service

+20543	+6996	-14126	+38099	+7761	+67035
77.2%	7.9%	-11.4%	54.4%	10.7%	+17.6%

Ten Year growth rate 1980 to 1990: (Compounded)

5.9%	.7%	-1.2%	4.5%	1.0%	+1.45%
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[Source: FCC, Washington, DC]

(Continued from page 5, CT2)

rule out 902-928 Mhz", a ham band. The 902-928 MHz spectrum is a so-called "Consumer Band" in which the FCC allows unlicensed higher power under §Part 15 Rules ...up to 50 millivolts/meter at 3 meters. It is also the only higher power §Part 15 spectrum that would lend itself well to CT2 service.

The new unlicensed §Part 15 rules have caused much concern in amateur circles. Unlicensed low-power devices have no legal priority and users must discontinue their operation if they interfere with amateur radio communications which has secondary status.

Legally, amateurs have no grounds to insist that public phone tiepoints not be accessed between 902-928 MHz. The possibility even exists for hams to join in on private ongoing telephone conversations! We sure hope that someone clues Gray into the ramifications of providing CT2 on a ham band!

JANUARY AMATEUR LICENSING STATS

<u>January</u>	<u>1987</u>	<u>1988</u>	<u>1989</u>	<u>1990</u>	
New					
Amateurs	2299	1189	2234	2465	
<u>Upgrading:</u>					
Novices	668	884	1373	1190	
Technicians	241	276	428	477	
Generals	309	255	320	338	
Advanced	<u>170</u>	<u>175</u>	<u>209</u>	<u>220</u>	
Total:	1388	1590	2330	2225	
<u>Renewals:</u>					
Total Renew:	2378	1972	868*	*193	
Novices	143	173	143*	*32	
<u>Purged:(*)</u>					
Total Drop:	510	759	1473*	*978	
Novices	326	355	550*	*375	
<u>Census:</u>					
Indiv. Oper.	421271	432411	444167	466554	
Change/Year	+4656	+15796	+11756	+23387	
<u>Indiv. Operators by Class:</u>					
<u>Extra</u>	<u>Advan.</u>	<u>General</u>	<u>Tech.</u>	<u>Novice</u>	<u>Total:</u>
<u>January 1987:</u>					
41255	97786	115616	85536	81078	421271
9.8%	23.2%	27.4%	20.4%	19.2%	100%
<u>January 1988:</u>					
43970	98408	113958	93675	82400	432411
10.2%	22.7%	26.3%	21.7%	19.1%	100%
<u>January 1989:</u>					
47221	99164	113823	102931	81028	444167
10.6%	22.3%	25.6%	23.2%	18.3%	100.0%
<u>January 1990:</u>					
49950	101370	116329	114505	84400	466554
10.7%	21.7%	24.9%	24.6%	18.1%	100.0%
Club/					
RACES &	(1987)	(1988)	(1989)	(1990)	
Military	<u>2568</u>	<u>2395</u>	<u>2263</u>	<u>2450</u>	
Total Active	423839	434806	446430	469004	
% Increase	+1.1%	+2.6%	+2.7%	*+5.1%*	

Adjusted Growth: -2.29%

(*) NOTE: Again we remind you that the U.S. amateur service is not really expanding at a 5.1% rate. Due to the implementation of the 10-year term license in 1984, 32,771 less amateurs have had to renew their operator license. (36,703 between Jan. 1, 1988 and Jan. 31, 1989 - only 3,932 between Jan. 1, 1989 and Jan. 31, 1990.) Assuming the same drop-out rate, if you adjust for this difference, the number of U.S. amateurs would be 436,233 or 10,197 less than a year ago - a loss of 2.29%. Growth in the amateur service has pretty much stagnated.

[Source: FCC, Gettysburg, PA]

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● **While the new Lithuanian Republic** and Soviet Union are locked in a controversy concerning self-government, the ham community seems to have already achieved independence. Lithuanian amateurs are now using the LY prefix assigned before World War 2 instead of their Soviet designated UP. QSLs now go to Box 1000, Vilnius 232001, Lithuania instead of Box 88 Moscow. Look for the Baltic states of Estonia and Latvia to be next.

● The Society of Newfoundland Radio Amateurs have been using the special call sign VO9WG to publicize the **Newfoundland and Labrador Winter Games**. On April 21, the Society will commemorate **International Marconi Day** with VO1MD. The **25th Anniversary of the Canadian maple leaf flag** is being honored by the Maple Leaf Radio Society of Listowel, Ontario, and their special event station: CF25A. Canada has also adopted the U.S. position on CB call signs. Effective April 1st, licenses and call signs are no longer required in their 27 MHz. General Radio Service.

● We got a note from YASME's **Iris Colvin, W6QL**, advising that she and Lloyd have concluded their VK2GDD operation. "...with 4,000 radio amateurs worked on all bands 10 through 40 meters, phone and CW, and 142 countries - all within less than two weeks." She said next stop is New Zealand "...where we already have the call, ZK0AKH.

● This is the **200th anniversary of Bounty mutineers** landing on Pitcairn Island. Pitcairn amateurs will use the special call sign VR200PI during 1990 followed by their personal call sign suffix. Australia now has a VE program in place which they hope will alleviate their slow Amateur Service growth rate.

● Advanced Electronic Applications, Inc., of Lynnwood, WA, has introduced a new low-profile, high performance **HF IsoLoop antenna** designed by Professor Don Reynolds especially for AEA in association with Mike Staal, president of M2 Enterprises. Staal is also co-founder

of KLM Electronics. The IsoLoop tunes 20 through 10 meters and is rated at 150 watts. The three foot square horizontal antenna is tuned remotely by a supplied control box. Because of its small size and weight (12 lbs.), it is the perfect balcony or attic antenna and is ideal for areas with restricted antenna ordinances. Omni-directional, a rotator is not necessary ...nor are ground radials. (Tel. 206/775-7373)

● The ARRL advises that **Gateway, The Packet Radio Newsletter**, has been merged with **QEX, The ARRL Experimenters Exchange**. Published since 1984, Gateway is the chronicle of packet radio development. QEX aims to keep its readers up-to-date on Amateur Radio technology. Annual subscription to the new combined monthly publication is \$10 to League members, others: \$20.

● **Sam C. Sitton, KV5X**, is the new West Gulf ARRL Director replacing **Jim Haynie, WB5JBP** who was appointed League Vice President. **Tom Comstock, N5TC**, will be the new Vice-Director of the West Gulf Division pending an election.

● Radio Shack now offers Britannica's **26 volume Compton MultiMedia Encyclopedia** on a single 5" CD-ROM. Tandy's new IBM compatible 2500XL (10 MHz 286 based) computer comes equipped with a VGA monitor, an internal CD-ROM drive and MS-DOS 3.3 in ROM. The software features 15,000 photographs, many in full color, animated sequences, 60 minutes of sound, 5,800 maps, charts and graphs, 1,500 word speech, and the complete Webster Intermediate Dictionary. It was introduced on Feb. 27th at the 5th Annual CD-ROM Conference in San Francisco.

● **The FCC now has its full complement of commissioners**. The Senate quickly approved Ervin Duggan to fill the fifth and final vacancy at the agency. He has a protestant administrative background and was a former reporter for the *Washington Post*. More recently he had been acting as a communications consultant.

● **Bill Brown, WB8ELK**, has joined 73 Magazine as editor. Bill has been an active ham and ATV enthusiast for over 20 years and founded Amateur Television Quarterly magazine with Henry Ruh, KP9FO, in 1988. Bill is best known for his adventures with ham radio on balloons. He has launched a number of helium balloons carrying 2-meter CW, 440 MHz ham TV and 2 meter packet repeaters. Bill is a degreed engineer.

● Radioscan Corporation will announce the publication of an English version of **Radioscan Magazine** at the Dayton Ham-Venture on April 27-29. Radioscan is currently published only as a Spanish language ham magazine.

● To make room for additional classrooms, the **Electronics Museum of The Perham Foundation** on the Los Altos campus of Foothills Community College is faced with eviction and closing. In its place will go California's first Challenger Learning Center and Mission Site.

Among the museum's 10,000 artifacts are the personal and professional archives of Dr. Lee de Forest, one of the nation's leading electronics industry pioneers, the transmitter of nation's first commercial radio station, KQW circa 1920, and the historical documents of the trailblazers of Silicon Valley.

The initial funding for the museum was provided by industry on the understanding that the collection be perpetually preserved. Initially set for March 30, the closing has been delayed by a Superior Court of Santa Clara County temporary restraining order preventing college action to close the museum pending a hearing. A legal fund has been set up to help with costs.

Contributions go to: *The Perham Foundation*, 101 First Street Suite 394, Los Altos, CA 94022. **Dr. Robert C. "Smitty" Smithwick, W6JZU**, is a founding member of The Perham Foundation; **Dr. Seymour N. "Sy" Stein, WA6ROM** is currently a Director and past president.

● We got an interesting letter

Amateur Radio Rules Included FREE! Order shipped the same day that order is received. W5YI; P.O. Box #565101; Dallas, Texas 75356. (4B). Cost: \$5.95 each plus \$1.50 shipping/handling. W5YI Report; P.O. Box #565101; Dallas, TX 75356-5101

from the technical director of **Radio-Electronics Officers Union** headquartered in Washington, D.C. **Don Dishinger, W6RKT**, agrees "...that a lack of knowledge of CW by amateurs should not exclude them from the many, many pleasures afforded by ham radio. I would much prefer seeing an increased requirement for greater technical knowledge. One of the finest moments of ham radio is the one after the assembly of a new unit or a repair of a defective one -- when one exclaims, 'Hot Damn, It Works!'" Dishinger was very critical of the FCC for not updating its technical testing procedures since 1972.

● **Joe Michaels, W4DDV**, a ham for 50 years moved to Tucson, AZ, in May 1989. After erecting his fifty foot tower, neighbors began to complain about its appearance and alleged RFI. The FCC inspected Michaels' tower in the fall of 1989 and found it to be in compliance with all regulations and were unable to confirm any TVI complaints. The Superior Court ruled that the FCC had exclusive jurisdiction and the case was closed.

Now an appeal has reopened the case! The appeal charges that it is not interference that is on trial, it is the aesthetics of the tower. The tower is an "eyesore" - so it is back to square one. More legal funds are needed. **The Tower Defense Fund** (P.O. Box 42601, Tucson, AZ, 85733) has been set up by Gail Peterson, N7BXX, Chairman. (See Oct. 1, 1989, W5YI Report. *RFI Hysteria in Tucson.*)

● **The FCC has begun a massive study of the cable television marketplace.** The Cable Communications Act of 1984 deregulated the industry. The Act also requires a comprehensive report to be presented to Congress in five years. That date is October 28, 1990. The FCC wants recommendations for revision or repeal of existing cable rules. Comments on its *Notice of Inquiry* are coming in pretty much as expected. Cable companies generally want no change ...most everyone else supports re-regulation and more competition for cable.

The *National Cable Television Association* said cable deregulation

has worked precisely as intended and that cable TV was not a monopoly. Vowing to clean up its act, NCTA even adopted new customer service standards covering cable installation, service and billing. The *Community Antenna Television Association* said cable rate increases had not been excessive.

On the other hand, the *National Association of Broadcasters* recommended that cable be re-regulated. The *Association of Independent Television Stations* said additional guidelines were necessary to permit fair competition.

The *U.S. Telephone Association* called cable TV a monopoly in need of competition which telcos could provide. The *Motion Picture Association of America* agreed and urged the FCC to allow telcos to deliver video programming with regulatory safeguards. *NTIA, the National Telecommunications and Information Administration*, is also examining cable laws and is on record as supporting telco video distribution. The *U.S. Conference of Mayors* and the *National League of Cities* wanted municipal control of cable rates. Everyone including Congress seems unhappy with cable TV except the cable companies.

There are fourteen bills pending in Congress that would re-regulate the cable industry. John Danforth, (R-MO) introduced legislation that would restore city authority to regulate cable. John Dingell (D-MI) has criticized the cable industry for poor customer service and high rates. House Telecommunications Subcommittee Chairman Ed Markey (D-MA) says he intends to pass new cable guidelines this year. Rick Boucher (D-VA) has authored the *Cable Competition Act* which allows phone companies to distribute video services ...especially to rural consumers not now served by cable. Ernest Hollings (D-SC) called the cable marketplace very uncompetitive with uncontrolled spiralling rates.

It is expected that the FCC will eventually begin rulemaking which looks toward providing effective competition for the cable industry. Down the road, it appears certain you'll be receiving television through any one of a multitude of new ways including microwave

("wireless cable"), ku band ("Sky Cable") satellite, and (fiber optic cable) telephone hook ups. Hughes Communications is already building four 200 watt direct broadcast (DBS) satellites which can be received on a 12-18 inch flat antenna.

Wireless cable is simply broadcasting cable programming from a microwave tower to a house-top antenna. The FCC is considering ways to make more spectrum available for wireless systems and forcing cable companies to sell them programming at fair prices. New proposed rules will allow wireless operators to transmit up to 33 channels in the 2 GHz range at higher power levels. Conventional cable companies would be barred from owning wireless systems to prevent them from warehousing microwave channels thereby precluding competition. The stakes are high and it does not look good for the future of wired cable television. The idea is for the marketplace to provide the necessary competition and controls.

● Southern California radio amateurs now may take a **free on-the-air Gordon West code and theory class**, just by tuning in. The class meets each Tuesday evening, at 7:00 p.m. on 28.333 MHz - a frequency available to all amateur radio operators from Novice on up. This frequency also allows for voice as well as code practice.

"This class makes sense on the air. Why should students drive half an hour to a code class when they can do the same thing right at their own home station?" comments **Gordon West, WB6NOA**.

The end of the 8-week session features a VE-administered test session. Details about where and when the code test will be administered are announced right on the air. "VE systems are all over Southern California are contacting me to test our students -- they want to see whether or not this class is really going to work out, and I think that it is," states "Gordo"

Every week the code is increased 1 wpm faster. However, the code character rate is constantly held at 15 wpm with big spaces to slow it down. West can be reached at his 714/434-0666 class line.

● The *Personal Radio Steering Group* (PRSG) has just published the **1990 GMRS National Repeater Guide**; \$10 postpaid. The only publication of its kind, this ninth edition lists more than 1,100 GMRS repeater systems and monitoring watches in all 50 states, plus the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico. GMRS is one of the fastest-growing private land mobile radio services. General Mobile Radio System licenses are available only to private individuals for their personal, family and business communications. Many of the repeater systems listed in the Guide are operated by non-profit community service radio teams and user cooperatives. PRSG is the national service organization for GMRS licensees. [P.O. Box 2851, Ann Arbor, Michigan. ATTN: **Corwin D. Moore, Jr., WB8UPM**]

HAM CON ARTIST TO BE SENTENCED

Michael Harrison, WB2PTI, of Oceanside, NY, was rearrested February 14th for violating the terms of his bail. He had been indicted on August 28, 1989, by a Grand Jury in the Eastern District of New York on fifty counts of mail fraud.

He pleaded guilty to five counts of defrauding ham operators through the mails before Judge Jacob Mischler on February 26 and is in jail awaiting an April 19th sentencing date. Harrison faces 25 years imprisonment and more than \$1 million in fines.

Late 1988 issues of *73 Magazine* carried two-color full-page ads declaring that Atlas Radio was now back as a ham equipment distributor ...operating out of a post office box in Lynnbrook, Long Island, New York. The box, opened in 1987, listed a John McNamara as president of Atlas.

Other 1988 *73 Magazine* ads proclaimed Dentron Radio, another defunct ham equipment firm, had also been resurrected ...at an East Rockaway, L.I., New York, post office box. (See *W5YI Report* Jan. 15, 1989) Smaller advertisements were placed in the *Ham Trader Yellow Sheets*, *Popular Communications* and *Ham Radio* magazine. Harrison, who has a long history of using fictitious names, operated from his home and had no legitimate business office or address.

Atlas Radio is a well known and respected ham transceiver company that suspended business some ten years ago. The ad claimed the old and new Atlas Radio Co. were one and the same.

Offered were Uniden HR-2510 10-meter "President" transceivers at \$219.95 since Atlas and the Uniden Corporation had "joined forces."

We started getting phone calls from readers right around Christmas 1988 asking if we knew anything about Atlas and Dentron resuming operations. It seems amateurs were purchasing radios and repair parts but weren't receiving them. Credit card purchasers were told to send checks since Atlas was "...having trouble with credit cards."

Uniden headquarters is located here in Dallas. A ham in their marketing department told us Uniden knew nothing about Atlas and the \$219.95 prepaid price for the HR-2510 was below distributor cost. Uniden's legal department got involved for unauthorized use of its name. We tried to reach Harrison by telephone but received only recorded messages. Our calls were not returned.

Herb Johnson, W6QKI, the original founder of Atlas disavowed any knowledge of a "new" Atlas, as did Dennie Had, K8KXK ...the initial owner of Dentron Radio. Dennie knew Mike Harrison and we asked him to call both the Atlas and Dentron phone numbers listed in the ads. He called back and confirmed that the recorded voices were that of Mike Harrison.

We asked readers to let us know any further information regarding the activities of Michael Harrison and the complaints started pouring in! We turned them over to Martin Biegelman, postal inspector in Hicksville, NY. More than sixty-five victims were identified. One, **Garth Conover, N2BMP**, got taken for over \$3,000.

On Jan. 24th, 1989, Harrison called us about the write-up we did in our Jan. 15th issue. We expected the worst since we had implied his mail order operation was a swindle. Strangely, he was very reserved, pleasant and apologetic. Harrison said he had every right to use the Atlas and Dentron names since they were dormant firms. "The names were erased like a child erasing a blackboard," he said.

Harrison, a very smooth talker indeed, said amateurs had "over-reacted" to his delivery predicament and "...no one will be hurt by this at all." He mentioned Uniden as currently having no radios available because of an FCC equipment compliance problem. (See Feb. 1, 1989 *W5YI Report*)

Two days after the phone call, postal inspector Biegelman arrested Mike Harrison at his home in Oceanside, NY, and charged him with mail and wire fraud. He was arraigned in U.S. District Court and released on a \$25,000 personal recognizance bond. Months passed and still Harrison had not delivered the goods, nor made refunds.

On August 28, 1989, a federal grand jury returned a twelve page indictment charging Harrison with fifty counts of "...knowingly and willfully devising a scheme to obtain money by means of false and fraudulent pretenses and representations using the U.S. mails." He now faced a whopping 250 years in prison and a \$12.5 million fine. (See Sept. 15, 1989 W5YI Report)

You would have thought that Mike Harrison would have done something ...even if it was only to retain an attorney. Unbelievably, what he did was to run more mail order ads! On December 5, 1989, Harrison opened post office box 270 in Massapequa, L.I., NY, 11758, under the fictitious name of Robert Pearson. Unfortunately postal authorities were not made immediately aware of this new scam.

Harrison then ran an advertisement in the January 1990 *Ham Trader* publication requesting Drake transceivers TH-5, power supplies, accessories, Yaesu equipment, etc. Authorities eventually became aware that Harrison was up to another scheme and moved to revoke his bail.

Postal authorities would like to hear from anyone who was victimized at the Box 270/Massapequa address. (Send to: Postal Inspector Biegelman, Box #160, Hicksville, NY 11802-0160) Box 270 was closed by postal authorities in early Jan. 1990.

We were also told us that Harrison sent in ads to CQ and QST magazines under the name of Robert Pearson, but the advertisements were not run. Biegelman said he had the ad payment checks.

In January and February, bail revocation hearings were held but Harrison failed to appear as ordered. On Feb. 14th, the judge issued postal authorities a warrant for his arrest for failing to keep the court dates and for committing crimes while out on bond. Harrison realized he was in deep trouble and suspected the judge would revoke bail and throw him in jail.

So rather than appear in court, Harrison tried the

insanity defense route. He tried to check himself into a Long Island mental hospital. Postal authorities arrested Harrison at the South Nassau Community Hospital in Oceanside. Doctors wouldn't admit him because he wasn't sick.

On February 26, Harrison pled guilty to five counts of mail fraud. Since there will be no trial, no testimony was heard by the judge. If you would like to write Judge Mischler to express your thoughts or experiences - or to advise him of any other relevant sentencing information, please address your correspondence to:

Judge Jacob Mischler
U.S. District Court
Long Island Courthouse
Uniondale Avenue & Hempstead Turnpike
Uniondale, NY 11553

Inspector Biegelman called Harrison a chronic, pathological con man and told us he first came across Harrison in 1980 when he received complaints about an outfit called Communications Technology Group on Merrick Road in Oceanside, NY. It was the same situation. People were never shipped ordered merchandise. Harrison did refund the victim's money, however, so he was not prosecuted.

Harrison, who does not work, has apparently made a career of ripping off unsuspecting ham operators and firms. This go round, however, he spent the money he received and was unable to make restitution. Harrison, who supposedly owns three Corvettes, is also known to have operated other scams under such defunct company names as Osborne Computer, Victor Technologies and Webster Radio using the alias names of Marc Hansen, Edward Harrison and John McNamara.

Biegelman also told us he received mail from hams all over the world who said they had been defrauded by Harrison over the last ten years "...people from England, from Spain, from Sweden, from Japan ...who had sent him large sums of money and never got anything."

If you ...or anyone you know has been ripped off by Harrison, the judge should know about it. Sentencing is scheduled for April 19th. You might even want to be there and speak to the judge personally. If you go, we would like a report of what transpires. **73/Fred/W5YI.** See you in two weeks.